



# The truth about ACE implementation in primary care settings: The good, the bad, the in-between

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## Disclosure

I have no relevant financial relationships to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

I do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device.

I work for CHOC and I am the Clinical Champion of the PRACTICE grant

# What makes this presentation unique?

This training was created for providers,  
by providers!

# Objectives

- To explain trauma-informed care principles and provide concrete examples
- To discuss how to integrate the ACE screening into clinical workflow
- To identify barriers to ACE screening implementation and ways to manage these barriers
- To discuss effective and efficient ways of explaining ACEs, toxic stress, and stress busters to patients



# What is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)?

Stressful or traumatic experiences people have by age 18 that were identified in the landmark 1998 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente

They relate to 10 categories of adversities in three domains: abuse, neglect, and/or household dysfunction

# 10 Categories for Adverse Childhood Experiences

*The three types of ACEs include*

## ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

## NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

## HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Mother treated violently



Substance Abuse

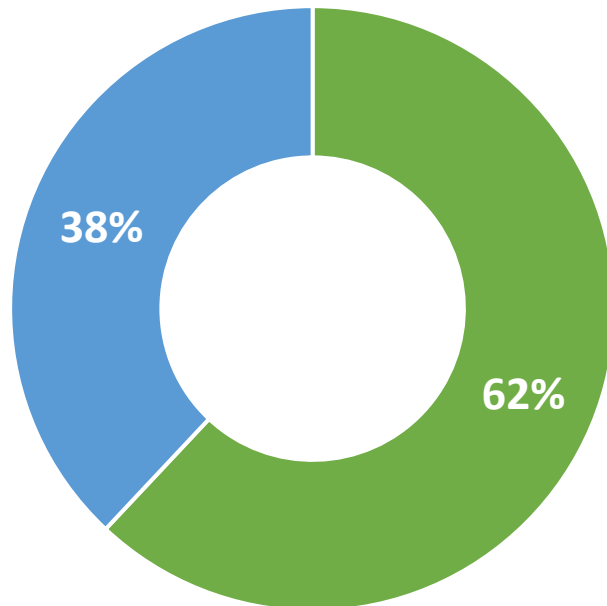


Divorce

# Prevalence of ACE in California

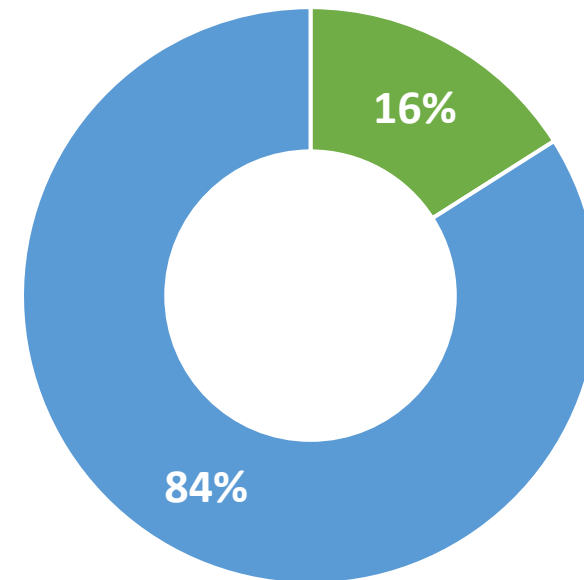
## Californians who have experienced at least 1 ACE

■ Have experienced at least 1 ACE



## Californians who have experienced 4 or more ACEs

■ Have experienced 4 or more ACEs



## ACES can have lasting effects on...



Health (obesity, diabetes, depression, suicide attempts, STDs, heart disease, cancer, stroke, COPD, broken bones)

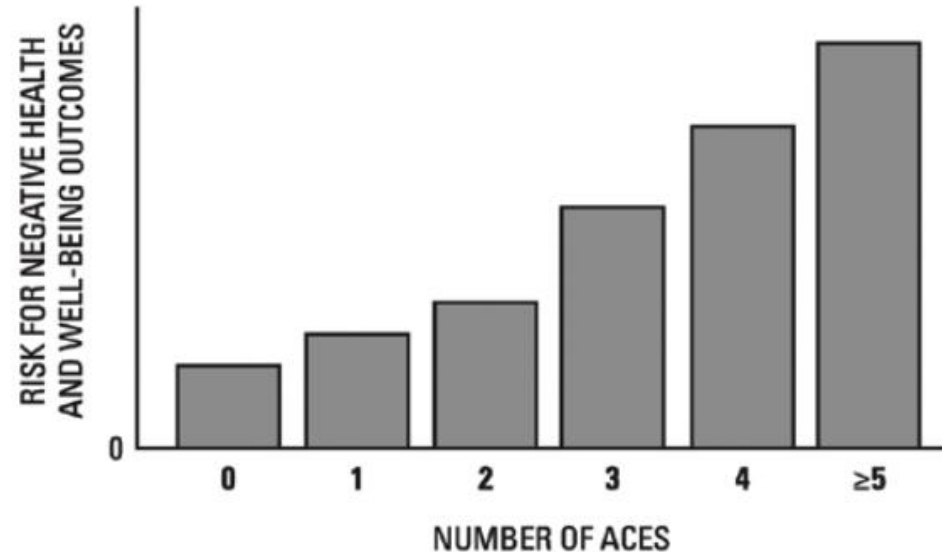


Behaviors (smoking, alcoholism, drug use)



Life Potential (graduation rates, academic achievement, lost time from work)

ACEs have been found to have a graded dose-response relationship with 40+ outcomes to date.\*



Source: [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/ACE\\_graphics.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/ACE_graphics.html)



\*This pattern holds for the 40+ outcomes, but the exact risk values vary depending on the outcome.

Life expectancy of a person with six or more ACEs is **20 years shorter** than a person with no ACEs



# ACE Prevention and Intervention at all levels

“This is treatable, this is beatable. The single most important thing that we need today is the courage to look this problem in the face and say this is real, and this is all of us.”  
- Nadine Burke Harris

 <b>Preventing ACEs</b>	
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<b>Strengthen economic supports to families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening household financial security</li> <li>• Family-friendly work policies</li> </ul>
<b>Promote social norms that protect against violence and adversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public education campaigns</li> <li>• Legislative approaches to reduce corporal punishment</li> <li>• Bystander approaches</li> <li>• Men and boys as allies in prevention</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure a strong start for children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood home visitation</li> <li>• High-quality child care</li> <li>• Preschool enrichment with family engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Teach skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social-emotional learning</li> <li>• Safe dating and healthy relationship skill programs</li> <li>• Parenting skills and family relationship approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Connect youth to caring adults and activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring programs</li> <li>• After-school programs</li> </ul>
<b>Intervene to lessen immediate and long-term harms</b> 	<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;"><b>Enhanced primary care</b></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim-centered services</li> <li>• Treatment to lessen the harms of ACEs</li> <li>• Treatment to prevent problem behavior and future involvement in violence</li> <li>• Family-centered treatment for substance use disorders</li> </ul>

# Why primary care settings?

“Primary care is the ideal focal point for making available knowledge about ACEs’ impact on health and offering needed information and links to interventions”

Trusted patient-  
provider  
relationship

Continuity of care

Health experts

Access to diverse &  
hard-to-reach  
populations

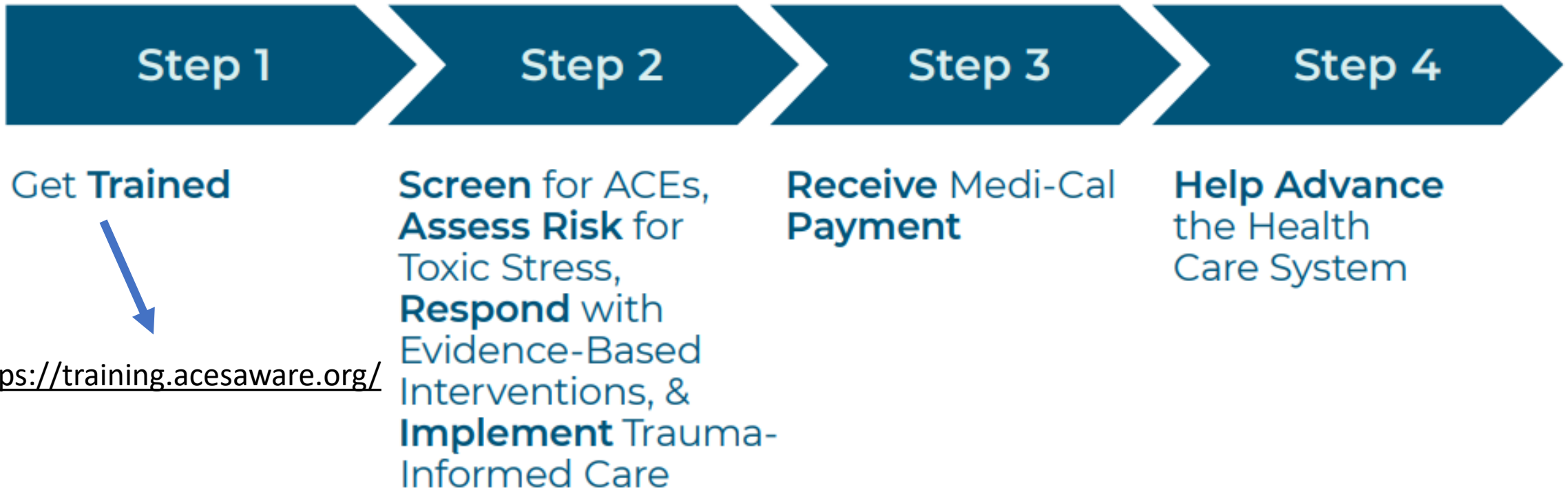


The ACEs Aware initiative offers training, screening tools, clinical protocols, and information for Medi-Cal providers on how to receive payment for screening children and adults for ACEs.

- Effective January 1, 2020, qualified Medi-Cal providers are eligible for a **\$29 payment** for screening patients up to age 65 with full-scope Medi-Cal using a qualified screening tool.
- As of July 1, 2020, to receive payment, providers must have **completed a certified training and self-attested** to completing it.
- Course can be accessed at:  
<https://training.acesaware.org/>

# Steps for Providers

Providers should follow these steps to receive Medi-Cal payment from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) for ACE screenings:





# Steps for ACE screening implementation

- ✓ Complete ACE training
- ✓ Consider factors in developing a trauma-informed clinic
- ✓ Develop a clinic workflow
- ✓ Identify barriers to implementation and find helpful solutions
- ✓ Reach out to QIA team for support
- ✓ Talk about toxic stress and stress busters in a quick and effective manner

# Trauma-informed care principles

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Concrete examples you can quickly implement

# Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Principles

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- Establish the physical and emotional **safety** of patients and staff
- **Build** trust between providers and patients
- **Recognize** the signs and symptoms of trauma exposure on physical and mental health
- Promote **patient-centered, evidence-based care**
- Ensure provider and patient **collaboration** by bringing patients into the treatment process and discussing mutually agreed upon goals for treatment
- Provide care that is sensitive to the patient's **racial, ethnic, and cultural background, and gender identity**



# What does trauma-informed care mean to you?

“Understanding that past childhood trauma and events could lead to adverse outcomes later on, during childhood and later in life. It is important to **screen for these events and address them** because overall we want patients’ health to improve...whether from physical or behavioral health standpoint.”



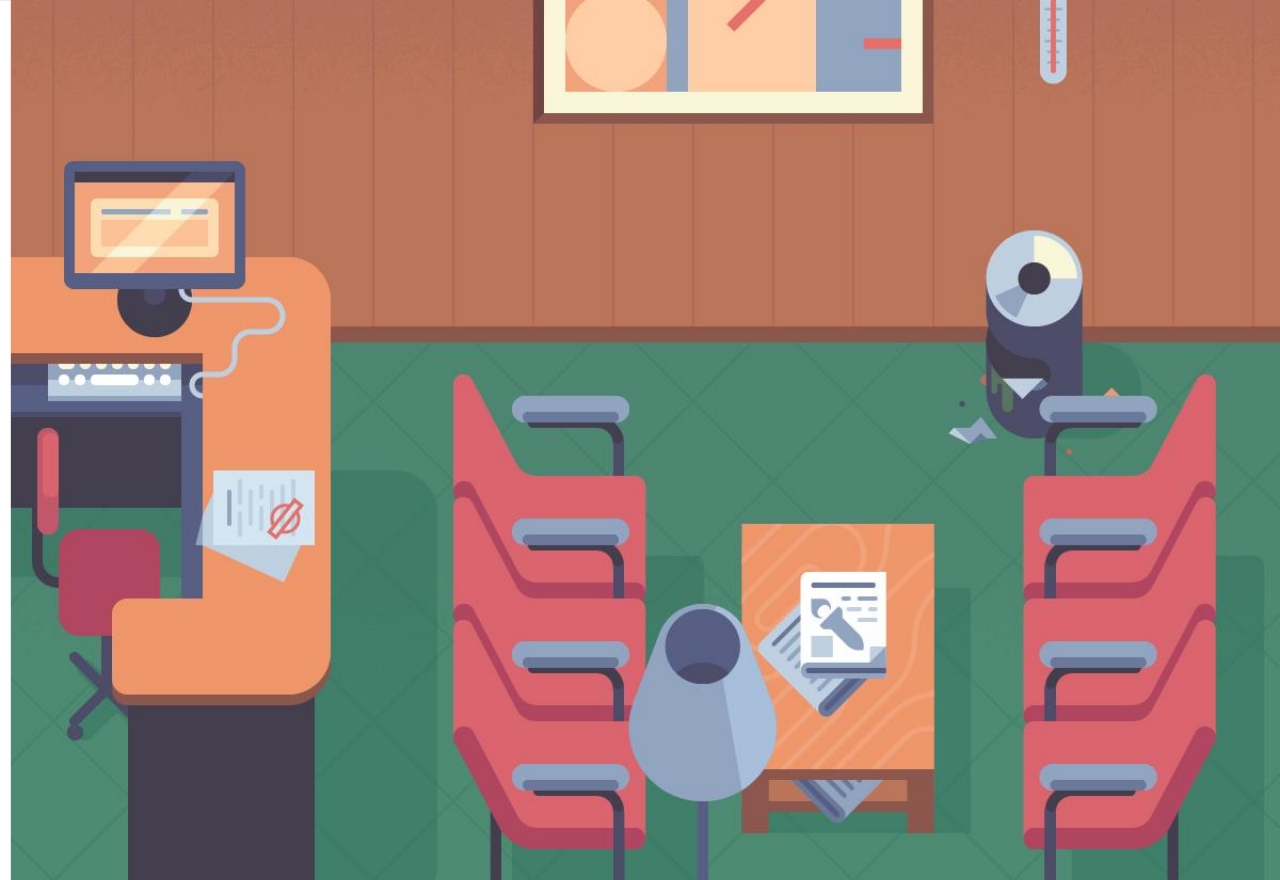
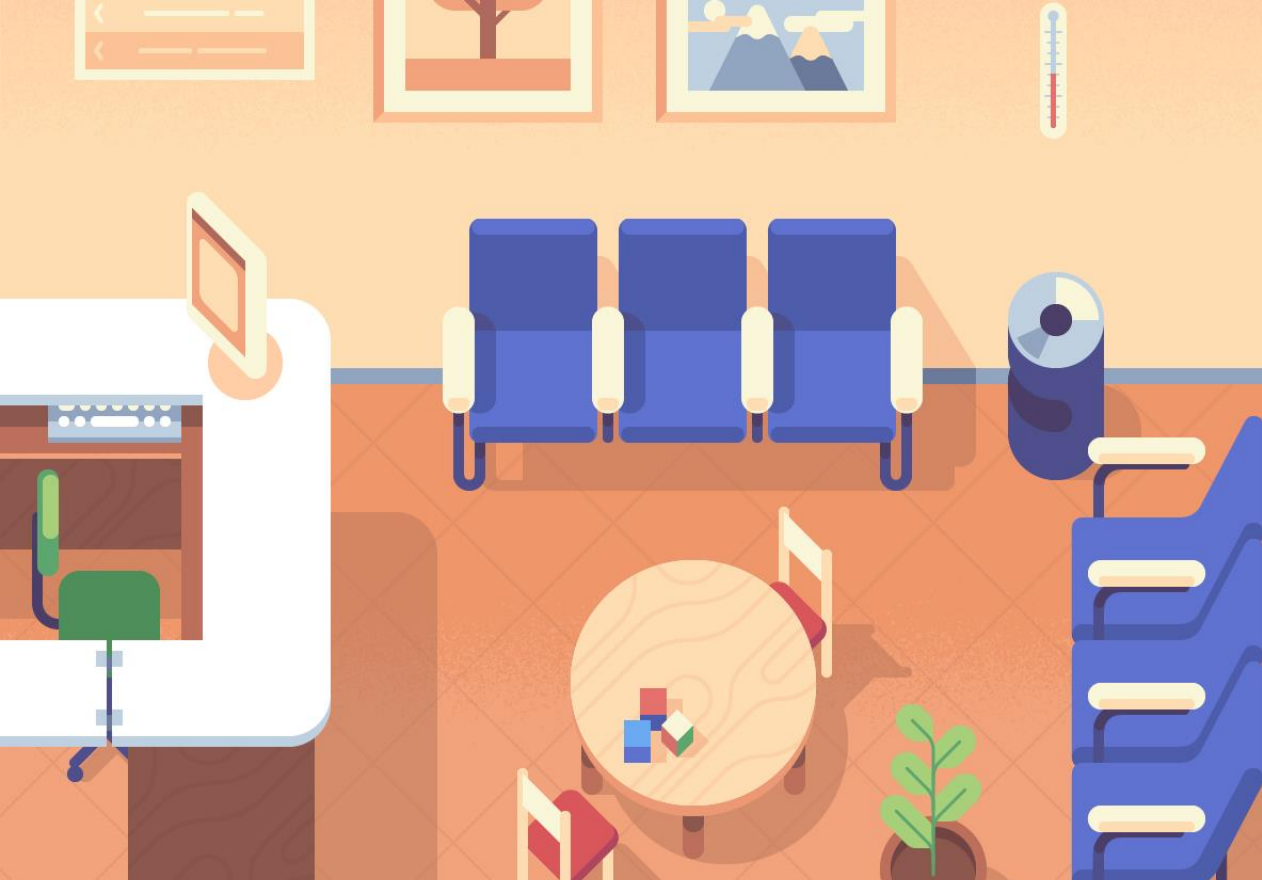
“Empathizing with them [the patients] that it is tough and what can we do to work together to provide a safer environment...I don’t think they feel offended when I bring that up. When you come from a **collaborative standpoint**, they are pretty receptive.”



# TIC Staff-Patient Interactions

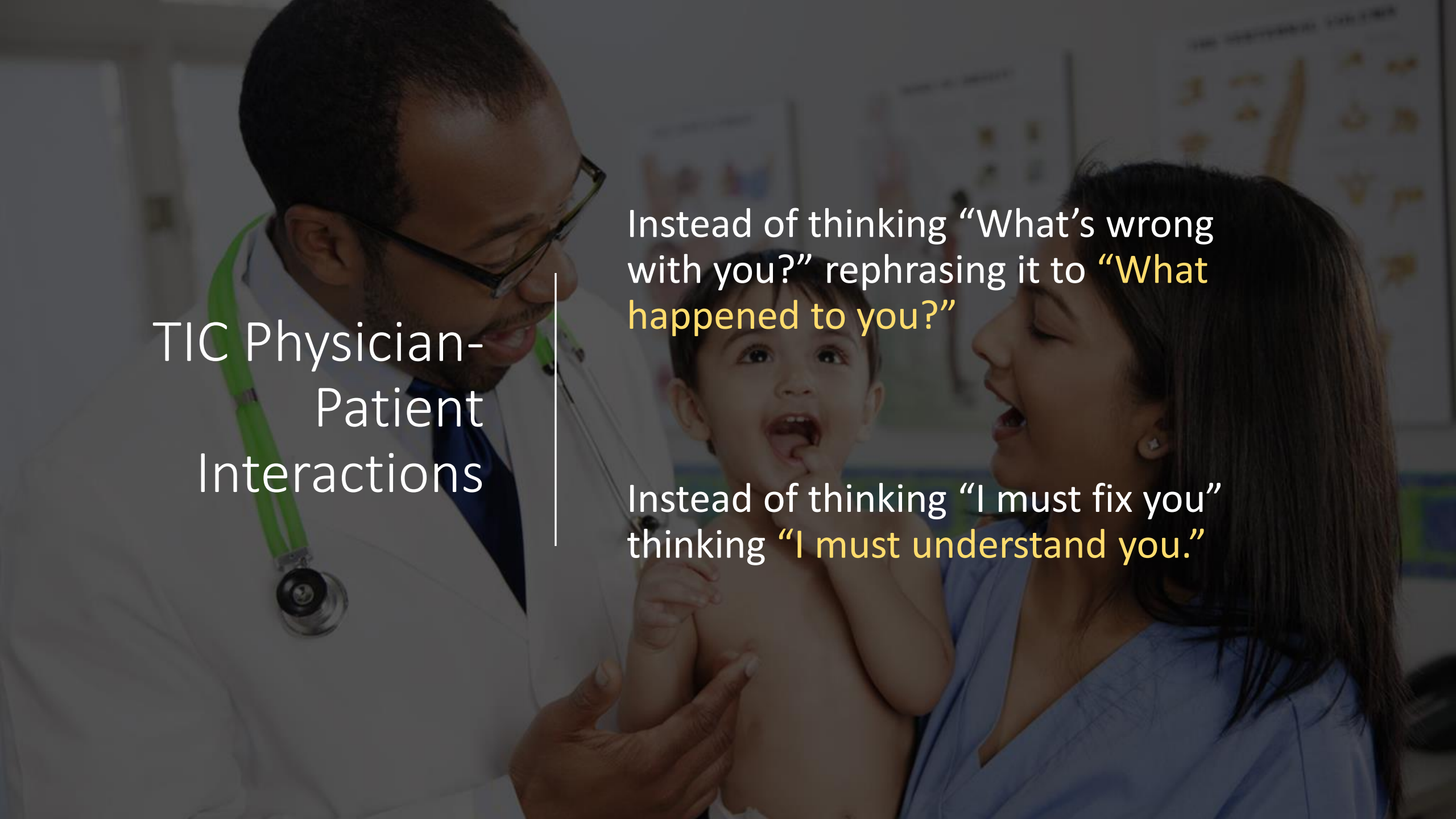
- Assessing comfort
- Providing language-appropriate resources
- Consideration of cultural and diversity factors
- Privacy





## TIC Clinic Layout

Which one has a trauma-informed design?



TIC Physician-  
Patient  
Interactions

Instead of thinking “What’s wrong with you?” rephrasing it to “**What happened to you?**”

Instead of thinking “I must fix you” thinking “**I must understand you.**”

# TIC for Taking Care of Staff

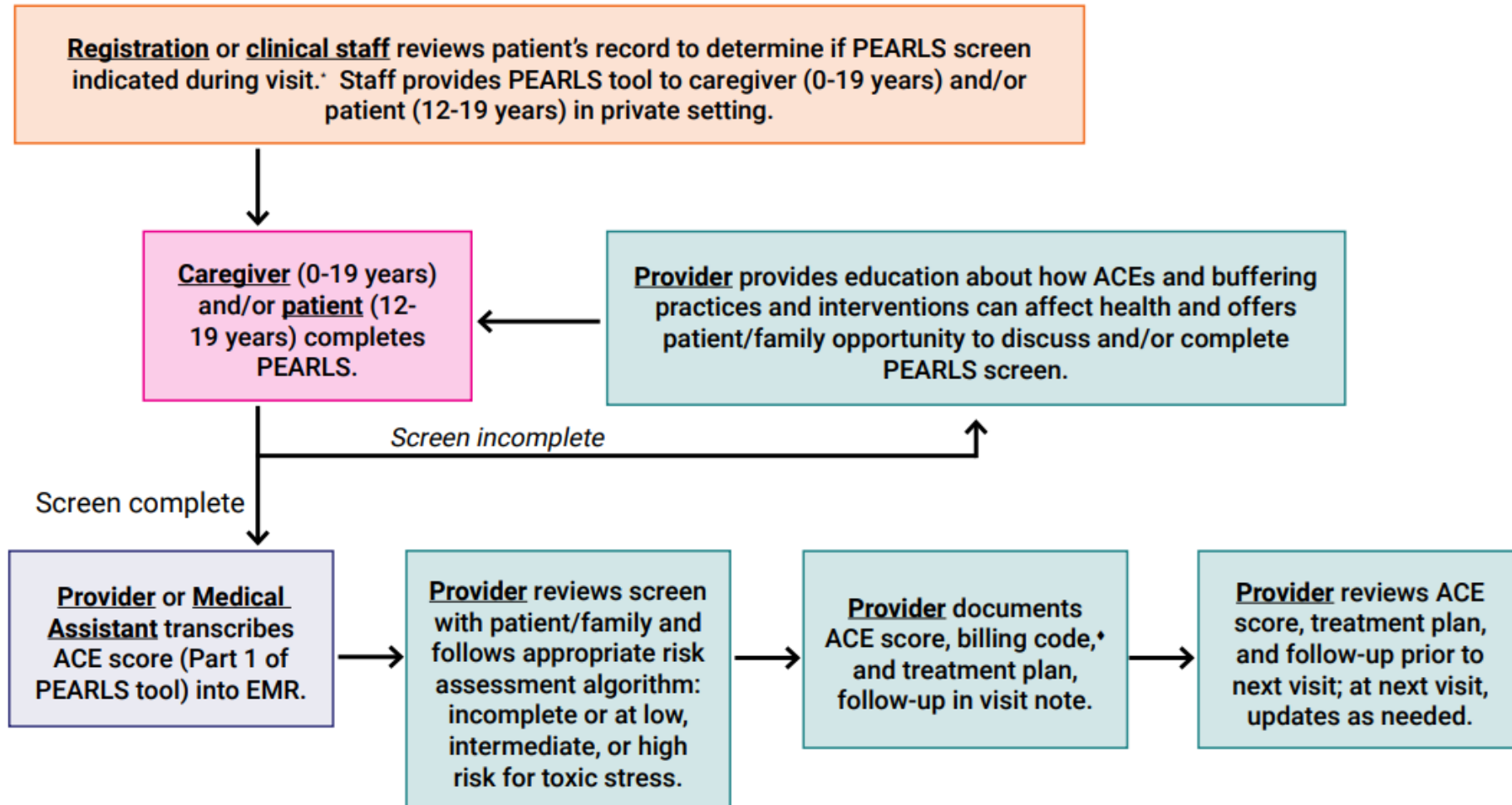
- Email-based wellness program
- In-house mental health resources for staff
- Providing staff with a safe space where they feel supported and seen
- Additional training and support
  - Diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - Examining systemic issues in health care
  - Motivational interviewing
  - Compassion fatigue
  - Managing stressful conversations
  - Supporting anxious patients

# How do I include an ACE screener in my office workflow?

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Integrating the ACEs screener into your clinical workflow

# Pediatric ACE Screening Clinical Workflow



\*PEARLS is recommended to be completed once per year.

# Office workflow: Meet Dr. Chai



## Bristol McFadden Medical Group:

- Mother and son practice with 3 PA's
- 2 Locations in Orange County
- Actively uses the OC Children's Screening Registry

# Office workflow: Meet Dr. Damikolas

- Regional Medical Director of AltaMed Orange County
- FQHC with 6 locations in OC and multiple locations in LA county
- AltaMed currently has over 65 employed providers which includes physicians and mid-levels. Their four specialties are: general practice, family practice, pediatrics, internal medicine.





# Key Elements of Clinical Workflow

Administration of tool

Form completion

Review and scoring of completed tool

Application of clinical algorithm and determination of clinical response to a positive ACE screen

Follow-up plan

Documentation & tracking

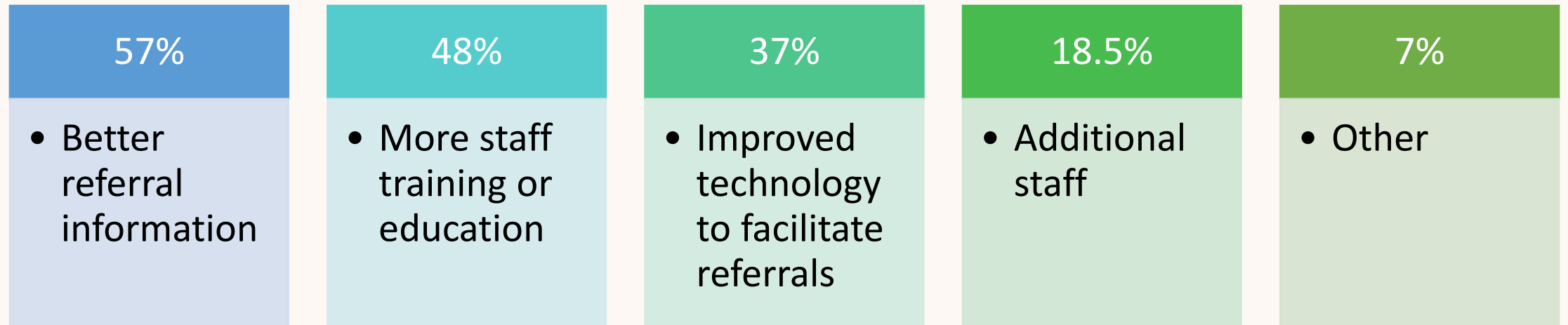
Medi-Cal billing

# Barriers to implementation

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What are they and how do we address them?

# Barriers based on CHOC survey data (n=27)



# Barriers based on physician interviews

Lack of time

“In terms of deep diving [into conversation about stress busters], I don’t feel like I have the opportunity there or maybe I don’t have the resources to sit down and talk to them a little bit longer. I guess the challenge is time for us.”

Lack of resources

“The biggest challenge is getting the patient connected to a counselor or therapist. Most of our patients are CalOptima and we go through the CalOptima Behavioral Health line...sometimes the list they have to connect with behavioral health providers aren’t the best. A lot are not taking new patients, or they don’t have availability for a couple months.”

Survey fatigue

“The biggest barrier is survey fatigue because this is another survey the family has to do. It might help if the families could do the surveys beforehand. The feedback I got is that there is just so many surveys.”

# Top 4 concerns related to administering the ACE screener across diverse populations

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Concerns about cultural barriers or misunderstandings

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Discomfort related to explaining ACEs and toxic stress across various cultures

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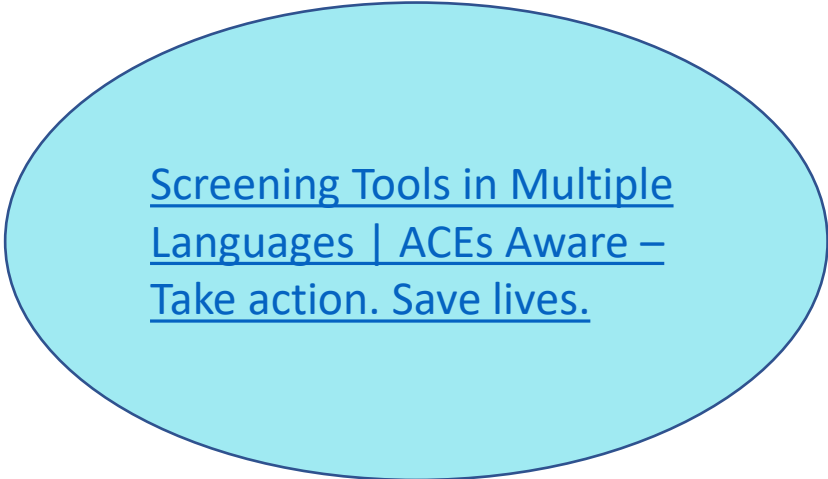
Language barriers

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Mental health stigma

Screening tools are available in:

Arabic	+
Armenian	+
Cambodian	+
Chinese	+
English	+
Farsi	+
Hindi	+
Hmong	+
Japanese	+
Korean	+
Laotian	+
Punjabi	+
Russian	+
Spanish	+
Tagalog	+
Thai	+
Vietnamese	+



[Screening Tools in Multiple Languages | ACEs Aware – Take action. Save lives.](#)

# What we do know based on the research

- Research has looked at ACE screening across various clinical settings, provider types, practice types, locations, and patient populations
  - Timing is not an issue
  - Provider concerns, discomfort, nerves are common
  - Patients are willing to complete questionnaire
  - Strengthens relationships
  - Improves understanding
  - Improves referral networks and coordination
  - Emphasizes connection between physical and mental health

# Barriers and solutions

Lack of time

62% of CHOC physicians reported it takes them 1-5 minutes to review ACEs  
Today we will discuss a quick and effective way of discussing ACEs

Lack of resources

AAP-AACAP-CHA declared child and adolescent mental health a crisis due to the pandemic. There have been soaring rates of referrals for mental health challenges, however, not every patient needs mental health services. The use of stress buster handouts and engagement in the stress busters have been found to be helpful in managing toxic stress.

Survey fatigue

Pediatricians have reported that the ACE screener is one of the simpler survey that patients have to fill out compared to other surveys. In general, they report positive responses from patients related to being asked these questions.



# How are CHOC physicians doing with the ACE screening implementation?

78% use ACEs screener

84% provide referrals to patients for all positive screens (i.e., +4)

53% practice trauma-informed care principles in their clinic

Compared to national data of 302 pediatricians who reported that only 4% ask about ACEs and 32% do not ask about any ACEs

# What happens after I screen for ACEs?

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Talking about toxic stress and stress busters in an efficient and effective manner

# Toxic stress explains how ACEs get “under the skin”



## NERVOUS SYSTEM

Disruption to the developing brain, including changes to the hippocampus, prefrontal cortex and amygdala, may lead to an increase in risk of cognitive impairment, attention deficits, learning disabilities, hyperactivity, self-regulation, memory and attention, and anxiety.



## CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

Toxic stress can increase a person’s risk of developing high blood pressure, elevating levels of inflammation and other serious health conditions.



## IMMUNE SYSTEM

Higher risk of infections and other health issues due to factors, which...

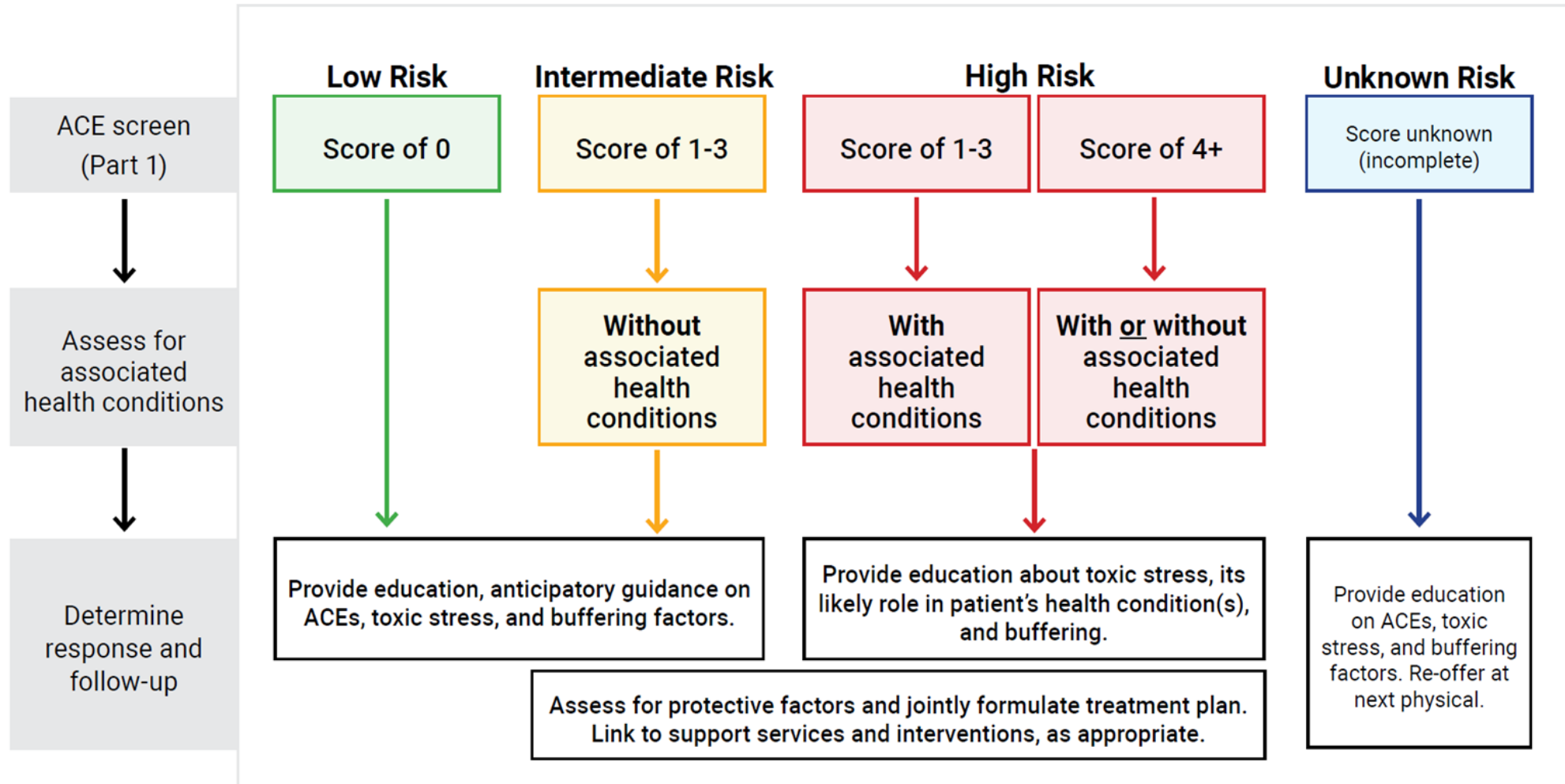
How would you explain this process to patients in 1-2 sentences?



## ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

Toxic stress can impact growth and development. It can also lead to obesity and changes in the timing of puberty, as well as other issues.

# ACEs and Toxic Stress Risk Assessment Algorithm





Get to know the  
stress busters



## Evidence-Based Strategies for Mitigating Toxic Stress

**Sources:** Bhushan D, et al. The Roadmap for Resilience: The California Surgeon General's Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress, and Health. Office of the California Surgeon General, 2020 DOI:10.48019/PEAM8812; Gilgoff et al. Adverse Childhood Experiences, Outcomes, and Interventions. *Pediatric Clinics* 2020; **67**(2): 259-73.

# Quality sleep



- Promote sleep hygiene
- Bedtime routine
- Discuss what the barriers to good sleep might be
- Sleep-assessment tools (Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index or Insomnia Severity Index)

Matricciani, L. A., Olds, T. S., Blunden, S., Rigney, G., & Williams, M. T. (2012). Never enough sleep: a brief history of sleep recommendations for children. *Pediatrics*, 129(3), 548-556.

California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)

# Balanced nutrition



- Encourage healthy eating habits
- Proper nutrition helps combat stress
- General rule of thumb includes 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables per day and foods rich in omega-3-fatty acids, including fish, nuts and fiber have been associated with decreased inflammation and improved health

California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)



# Physical activity

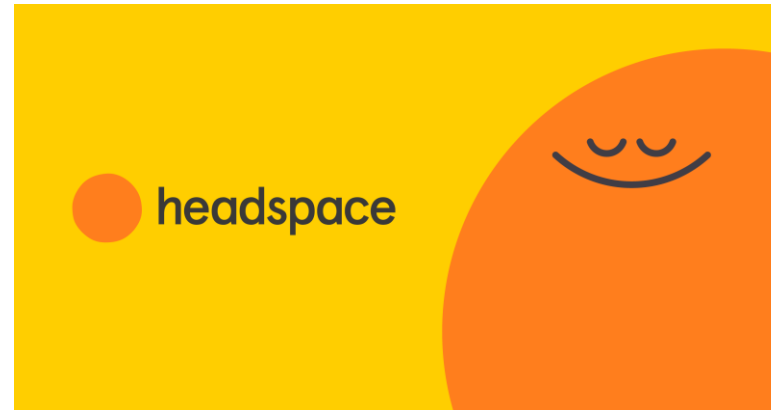


- Recommend at least 60 minutes of physical activity
- Caregivers can break it up into 15-20-minute intervals



California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)

# Mindfulness practices



- Educate about mindfulness
- Engage in mindfulness activities or use apps

California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)

# Experiencing nature



- Nature can come in many forms, including parks, local green spaces, playgrounds, or indoor plants
- Recommending community resources that are outdoors
- <https://www.parkrx.org/>



California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)

# Mental health care

Therapy	Ages	General Description
<u><a href="#">Child-Parent Psychotherapy</a></u>	Birth to 6 years	Dyadic intervention for young children and their caregivers that supports family strengths and relationships. <sup>586,587,994</sup>
<u><a href="#">Parent-Child Interaction Therapy</a></u>	2 - 12 years	Dyadic parent training treatment that emphasizes improving the quality of the parent-child relationship and interactions. <sup>995-997</sup>
<u><a href="#">Cue-centered therapy</a></u>	8 - 18 years	Protocol of 15 sessions through which children and caregivers learn about traumatic stress, how to cope rather than avoid, and the value of verbalizing their life experiences. <sup>998,999</sup>
<u><a href="#">Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT)</a></u>	Verbal children and adults	A structured, short-term treatment model for children and adults who have experienced trauma. <sup>1000-1002</sup>
<u><a href="#">Eye movement desensitization reprocessing (EMDR)</a></u>	Verbal children and adults	Focuses on helping clients resolve unprocessed traumatic memories. <sup>1003-1005</sup>
Family systems therapy	Verbal children and adults	Supports resolving family conflict or issues. <sup>1006,1007</sup>
Cognitive processing therapy	Adolescents and adults	A type of CBT, generally 12 sessions, that helps modify maladaptive thinking related to their trauma. <sup>1008</sup>
Prolonged exposure therapy	Adolescents and adults	A CBT approach that helps clients gradually approach their memories, feelings, and situations of trauma. <sup>1009</sup>

*Evidence-based trauma therapies.*

Image from: Bhushan D, Kotz K, McCall J, Wirtz S, Gilgoff R, Dube SR, Powers C, Olson-Morgan J, Galeste M, Patterson K, Harris L, Mills A, Bethell C, Burke Harris N, Office of the California Surgeon General. Roadmap for Resilience: The California Surgeon General’s Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress, and Health. Office of the California Surgeon General, 2020. DOI: 10.48019/PEAM8812.

California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General’s Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from [https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)

# Supportive relationships



- Assessing social relationships
- Identifying challenges (bullying?)
- Increasing socially distant interactions
- Decreasing social media
- Recommending engagement in community resources

Center on the Developing Child (n.d.).  
*Resilience*. Retrieved from  
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>

California for All (n.d.). *California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19*. Retrieved from  
[https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers\\_and\\_kids\\_california\\_surgeon\\_general\\_stress\\_busting\\_playbook\\_draft\\_v2\\_clean\\_ada\\_04072020v2.pdf](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf)



Open network and access for CBO's, healthcare providers and individuals to update and claim program listings

Easy to search and navigate low-cost and free sources for underserved communities, by distance, filters and program eligibility requirements

Thousands of resource listings for Orange County with over 3000 resources

Tool for Advancing Health Equity



ZIP or keyword or program name



Select Language

FOOD

HOUSING

GOODS

TRANSIT

HEALTH

MONEY

CARE

EDUCATION

WORK

LEGAL

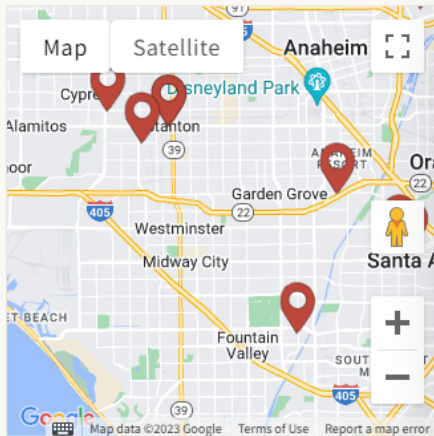
westminster, ca (92683) / housing / help find housing < 1 - 10 of 54 >

Sort by RELEVANCE CLOSEST

Personal Filters

Program Filters

Income Eligibility



Notice out-of-date information or see a program you work for? Click Suggest to share an update or claim your program listing to get access to free tools and data.

### Housing Navigation and Retention Services

by Illumination Foundation (IF)

Reviewed on: 04/23/2023

Housing Navigation and Retention are two services provided within the CalAIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal) housing and healthcare service environment. This program provides: - Help...

Main Services: temporary shelter, help find housing, short-term housing, navigating the system

Serving: all ages, individuals, families, with children, homeless

#### Next Steps:

Call 760-861-8554 or email css@ifhomeless.org to get services.

3.74 miles (serves your local area)

7855 Katella Avenue, Stanton, CA 90680

Closed Now: See open hours

MORE INFO

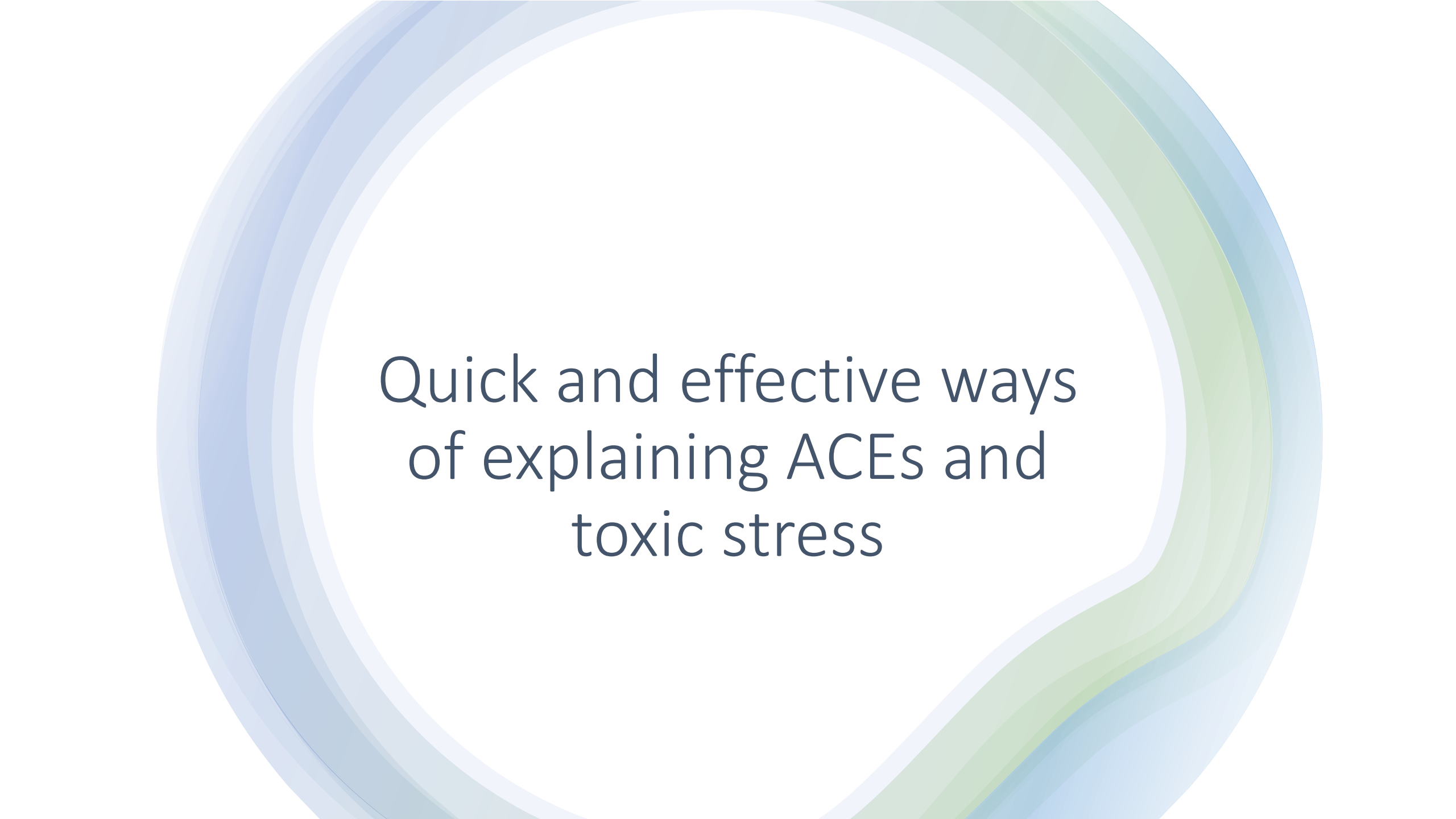


CONTACT HERE

### Recuperative Care

by Illumination Foundation (IF)

Reviewed on: 11/26/2022

A decorative graphic consisting of several concentric, overlapping circular bands. The colors transition from light blue on the left to light green on the right, with a white center. The bands have a soft, blurred appearance, creating a sense of depth and movement.

Quick and effective ways  
of explaining ACEs and  
toxic stress



# Lower Risk of Toxic Stress: 0 ACEs

“Thank you for completing the form that asked about certain events your child has experienced. It gives us information that helps us to better care for your child. From what I see on the form, your child has not experienced any of the things listed here. Is that correct?”



“We know that ACEs may occur at different points in life, so if you do experience any of these, don’t hesitate to check in with us because the science tells us that early intervention can help prevent negative physical and mental health outcomes. These things may include having healthy relationships with family and friends, eating healthy foods, getting regular exercise, spending time outside in nature, having a regular bedtime and getting enough sleep.”



# Preventative Questions



- For patients:
  - “How do you cope with stressful situations?”
  - “Which of these strategies would you be interested in trying to help manage stress?”
  - “Let’s make a plan for how you can try these strategies during your day.”
- For parents:
  - “ACEs Aware has put together a self-care tool [show [pediatric self-care tool](#)]. We can look at some of these activities together and discuss what you think would be best for your routine. You may be doing some of these strategies already.”

## ACEs Aware Self-Care Tool for Pediatrics

When a child or teen has experienced significant Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), their body may make more or less hormones than is healthy. This can lead to problems with a child's physical and/or mental health, such as asthma, poor growth, depression, or behavior problems. Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments where children feel safe emotionally and physically can protect children's brains and bodies from the harmful effects of stress. You can help your child be healthier by managing your own stress response and helping your child do the same. Healthy nutrition, regular exercise, restful sleep, practicing mindfulness, building social connections, and getting mental health support can help to decrease stress hormones and prevent health problems. Here are some goals your family can set together to support your child's health. *[Check the goals that you are picking for yourself and your family!]*

- Healthy relationships.** We've set a goal of...
  - Using respectful communication even when we are upset or angry
  - Spending more high-quality time together as a family, such as:
    - Having regular family meals together
    - Having regular "no electronics" time for us to talk and/or play together
    - Talking, reading, and/or singing together every day
  - Making time to see friends to create a healthy support system for myself and our family
  - Connecting regularly with members of our community to build social connections
  - Asking for help if a relationship or environment feels physically or emotionally unsafe
    - The National Domestic Violence hotline is **800-799-SAFE (7233)**
    - The National Sexual Assault hotline is **800-656-HOPE (4673)**
    - To reach a crisis text line, **text HOME to 741-741**
  - Create your own goal:

## Intermediate Risk of Toxic Stress: 1-3 ACEs

“The good news is that we also have strategies that have been shown to help children and adults calm the stress response. These include things like good nutrition, healthy sleep, spending time in nature, regular exercise, mental health support, mindfulness, and healthy relationships.”

“I see from this form that your child has experienced some of the things listed here. We now understand that exposure to stressful or traumatic experiences may alter the amount of stress hormones that your child’s body makes, and this can increase the risk for health and developmental problems.”



“Which of these strategies would you be interested in trying to help manage stress? Let’s make a plan for how you can try these strategies during your day.”

Review  
pediatric  
self-care  
tool



**High Risk of Toxic Stress:  
1-3 ACEs with ACE-Associated Health Conditions OR  
4 + ACEs with/without ACE-Associated Health Conditions**

“I see that you answered “yes” to a number of questions, and your child’s ACEs may be contributing to their poor growth/ asthma/ diabetes/other AAHC].”



“It is possible that because of what your child has experienced or is experiencing, their body is making more stress hormones than it should. This could be what’s affecting their growth. I want to refer you to a specialist that can help you learn how to support the two of you and reduce the amount of stress hormones that their body is making.”



REFERRALS



OPTIONAL: “We also know that a healthy caregiver is one of the most important ingredients for healthy children so an important part of helping your child heal will involve managing your own stress level and practicing taking care of yourself.”

# Questions to ask adolescents who have endorsed an ACE

## Assessing safety

Do you feel safe now?

Where do you feel the safest?

Please know that our clinic is here to help if you ever feel scared or unsafe at home, at school, or anywhere.

## Reviewing coping

When things get hard for you, where do you draw your strength?

How does this help you?

How do your family or friends support you?

When you are stressed or worried, what is most helpful?

## Examining stress busters

Is there an adult, like a mom, dad, aunt, uncle, grandparent, or mentor in your life who is there for you, no matter what?

Who do you rely on?

Practicing mindfulness for 10-12 minutes a day can be helpful in calming down some of the stress you might be feeling. Are there apps you have on your phone you can use?

Have you taken a mindful walk before?

# Transition to treatment and follow-up plan

- **Review of stress busters**
  - “Which of these strategies would you be interested in trying to help manage stress? Let’s make a plan for how you can try these strategies during your day.”
- **Make a referral if need be**
  - “I would also like to refer you/[child’s name] to some resources or services that could be helpful.”
- **Following up**
  - “I [or someone from my team] will contact you in \_\_\_\_ weeks/months to check in on whether [treatment(s) selected] are helping you/[child’s name].”



AltaMed





# How has screening for ACE **enhanced** the care that your practice provides?

“ACEs allows us to provide early interventions and prevents possible problems to be addressed sooner”

“Identify the causes of stress related to problems faster in children”

“Allowing us to see the different views of stressors between parent and patient”

“Opens up the topics that are difficult to talk about”

“Able to find out the safety and trauma exposure of my patients”

“It takes care of traumatic experiences of patients that were not disclosed or discussed during their doctor and patient primary interactions”

# ACEs Aware Online Provider Training



- Certified provider training is available on [training.ACEsAware.org](https://training.ACEsAware.org)
- Free, 2-hour online course that offers CME and MOC credits
- Includes information on:
  - The impact of ACEs and toxic stress on health
  - Clinical scripts for introducing these topics
  - A clinical algorithm to assess for risk of toxic stress
  - Steps to create an appropriately tailored, strengths-oriented, and evidence-based treatment and follow-up plan
- Additional certified trainings will become available over time

# Resources

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**Book:** [Childhood Trauma and Resilience: A Practical Guide](#)

**Medi-Cal Billing Codes**

[Billing & Payment | ACEs Aware – Take action. Save lives.](#)

**Provider Toolkit**

[Provider Toolkit | ACEs Aware – Take action. Save lives.](#)

**Pediatric ACEs and Related Life-Events Screening Tools**

[Screening Tools in Multiple Languages | ACEs Aware – Take action. Save lives.](#)

**Sample Scripts for Pediatric Medical Team**

[ACE Screening Sample Scripts for Pediatric Clinical Teams \(acesaware.org\)](#)

**Communicating to your Patients about ACEs**

[Communicating about ACEs](#)

**Screening Adolescents and Addressing Unique Needs of Immigrant Youth**

[Screening Adolescents](#)

# Questions?

*LONG LIVE CHILDHOOD*

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